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What is claimed is:

- 1. A composition comprising colloidal Fe₃O₄ particles coated with a biotin-binding protein.
- 2. A composition as claimed in claim 1 wherein the biotin-binding protein is avidin or streptavidin.
- 3. A composition as claimed in claim 2 wherein the biotin-binding protein is streptavidin.
 - 4. A method for synthesis of a composition as claimed in claim 3, said method comprising the steps of incubating colloidal Fe₃O₄ particles with a biotin-binding protein.
 - 5. A method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
 - a) forming colloidal Fe₃O₄ particles by mixing aqueous FeCl₂ with aqueous FeCl₃ and adding aliquots of the mixture to an alkaline solution;
 - b) adding a biotin-binding protein.
 - 6. A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the molar ratio of FeCl₂: FeCl₃ is between 1:1.5 and 1:2.
 - 7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the molar ratio of FeCl₂: FeCl₃ is 1:1.5.
 - 8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the aqueous FeCl₂ is FeCl₂.4H₂0.
 - 9. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the aqueous $FeCl_3$ is $FeCl_3.6H_2O$.
- A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said forming step further includes adding an ammonia solution to the mixture of FeCl₂ and FeCl₃.

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- 11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the biotin-binding protein is added in excess.
- 5 12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the biotin-binding protein is streptavidin.
 - 13. A method of immobilising a biotinylated compound comprising incubating said biotinylated compound in solution in the presence of a composition as claimed in claim 1.
 - 14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the biotinylated compound is selected from the group consisting of a nucleic acid molecule, a protein, and a peptide.
 - 15. A method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising the step of separating the biotinylated compound and the composition from said solution.
 - 16. A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said separating step further comprises the step of magnetically attracting the biotinylated compound and the composition to a surface.